



The President's Daily Brief

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VIETNAM

President Thieu announced his cabinet today. He said he was pleased with it despite the fact that it did not include all the elements and people he had hoped to get. There are a number of important new faces and stronger and more competent ministries to replace weak ones in the Huong cabinet. Premier Khiem will have more of a team and enjoy more respect and cooperation in the assembly. Khiem himself will continue as Minister of Interior. Senator Tran Van Don was offered the post of Veterans Affairs with title Minister of State but he refused. The post was then given to a member of his National Salvation Front. Tran Van Lam was named Foreign Minister. Nguyen Van Bong refused to serve as Minister of State but agreed to cooperate with the government while maintaining the Progressive Nationalist Movement in a posture of "constructive opposition."

LIBYA

A military group took the occasion of the absence of King Idris in Turkey to declare an Arab Republic of Libya early this morning. The so-called "Revolutionary Council" apparently controls Tripoli and probably Benghazi but whether it has mastered forces loyal to the King throughout the country is still unclear. The U.S. Charge is of the opinion that very junior officers seem to be running the show. The "Council" stated that the rights of all foreigners will be respected as well as Libya's international obligations.

The coup attempt would appear to be internally inspired. Many of the military hve long been antagonistic to the

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relationship between the King and the Shalhi brothers whom it was thought would be designated to take over control of the country after his death. The King is 80 years old, in ailing health and has frequently threatened to abdicate--the latest time last week. Apparently he made the threat once too often and some military officers have taken him up on it. There is at present no evidence of outside influence in the coup. While a republican government would doubtless be more militant in the Arab-Israeli situation than was the monarchy, there does not appear to be any direct connection between recent events in the Middle East and the coup attempt. It is too early to assess what a successful coup would mean as far as the two main U.S. interests in the area are concerned i.e., U.S. petroleum companies and Wheelus Air Force Base.

BRAZIL

President Costa e Silva suffered a stroke late last week and the military has decided to by-pass the constitution which would call Vice President Pedro Aleixo, a civilian, to take over during the President's incapacitation. Instead an institutional act was issued designating the three military ministers General Lyra Tavares (army), Admiral Rademaker Grunewald (navy) and Marshal Souza e Mello (air force) to take over the powers of the Presidency until Costa e Silva is able to resume his duties. The best estimate is that he will be incapacitated at least 60 to 90 days although no one seriously believes he will ^{50X1} be able to resume power. This is the first institutional act to be issued in the name of the military (as opposed to the President) since 1964.

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